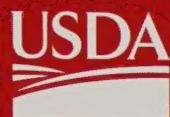


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ASIAN COLLECTIONS

U.S. NATIONAL ARBORETUM



The Asian Collections occupy the most dramatic landscape at the National Arboretum and claim the most exotic origins. Perennials, vines, shrubs, and trees are tucked into 13 acres of expansive planting beds on the banks of a forested hillside. At first glance, the plants look familiar. But closer inspection reveals important differences: The jack-in-the-pulpit displays a hooded flower that is larger and more dramatically colored than its American counterpart; the Chinese tulip tree matures at only a quarter of the height of the American species and produces similar but less colorful flowers. The plants' similarities are due to the common ancestry of many temperate Asian and eastern North American plants, which grew on a unified land mass millennia ago. Today, those ancient connections mean that many of the Asian plants will thrive in comparable U.S. habitats. The plants' unique features promise to contribute appealing novelty to American gardens.



Hooded flower
of the Asian
jack-in-the-
pulpit, *Arisaema
fargesii*

ASIAN VALLEY

The collection's oldest plantings grow on this south-facing hillside where in the 1940s, staff began planting species native to Asia. The sheltered site was perfect for testing the garden worthiness of a wide range of Asian species. Today, mature cryptomerias tower over an open ravine where smaller trees, shrubs, and groundcovers offer hints of the Eastern landscape. Many plants like hosta, pachysandra, and heavenly bamboo—all formerly unfamiliar in the West—thrive here as examples of now-commonplace ornamentals.



Fall-colored flower parts are one of the ornamental features of the seven son flower tree.

CHINA VALLEY

China's vast land harbors a wealth of botanical riches, a sampling of which grows in this collection. The Arboretum participated in the first Sino-American Botanical Expedition in 1980, when expeditions to remote habitats as well as to established nurseries uncovered hundreds of plants with potential as garden ornamentals. One of these, the seven son flower tree, *Heptacodium miconioides*, while now rare in the wild through loss of habitat, adorns many American gardens thanks to its appealing late-summer fragrant white flowers and maroon fall color.

The Anacostia River lies at the end of the steep ravine in Asian Valley.



ASIAN COL

JAPANESE WOODLAND

Arboretum collecting trips to Japan in the 1970s included visits to small, specialized nurseries where horticulturists sought plants already in cultivation in Japan that could be introduced into the United States. Several of their discoveries are now successful Arboretum introductions: *Ajanía pacífica*, with its sturdy, white-edged leaves and long-lasting bright-yellow blooms, and purple-flowered *Aster tataricus* 'Jindai' are two popular examples. These and many other favorite garden ornamentals grow along the winding trails of this collection, which features the shade-loving ornamental flora of Japan.

Entrance to the Japanese Woodland from Asian Valley.



KOREAN HILLSIDE

The plantings on this hillside include a few of the species grown from seeds and cuttings collected by Arboretum horticulturists from diverse habitats in South Korea in the 1980s. Expedition goals included finding common plants surviving in unusual conditions. *Camellia japonica*, for example, was thriving on a windswept seaside mountaintop. Its genes could contribute increased hardiness in crosses with showier but less hardy camellias.

LECTIONS

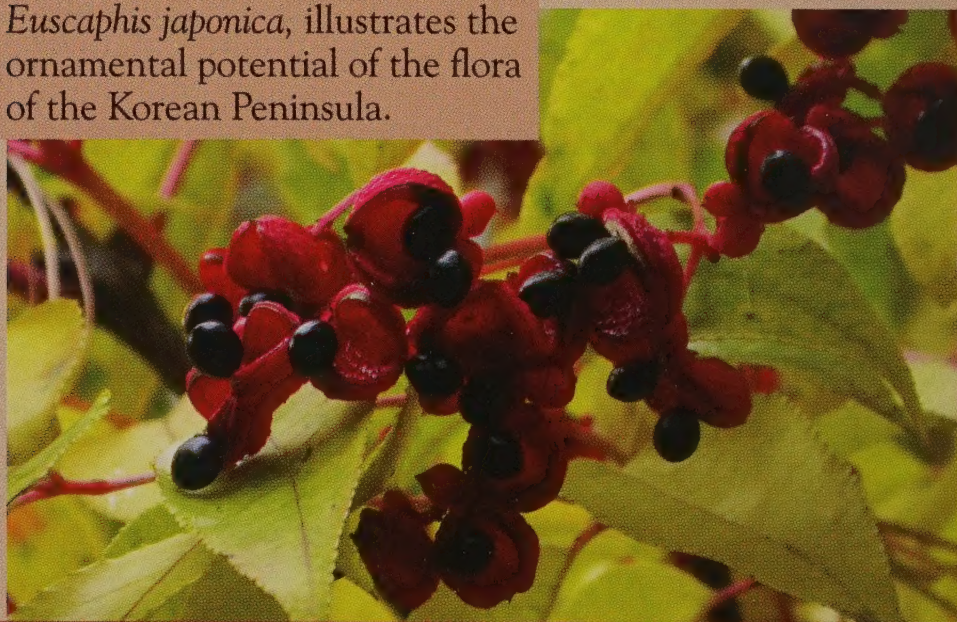


Camellia 'Winter's Joy' begins to bloom in November.

CAMELLIA COLLECTION

In the mid-1970s, over 1,000 camellias flourished in this collection. A series of harsh winters in the late 1970s, however, killed all but a handful of the popular shrubs. An Arboretum research geneticist recognized an opportunity: The survivors must be genetically different from those that died. He used one of the survivors as a parent in crosses with less hardy but more beautiful types. The resulting new, cold-hardy varieties now contribute their range of forms and colors to a new camellia collection, which contains over 50 different cultivars.

The fruit of the sweetheart tree, *Euscaphis japonica*, illustrates the ornamental potential of the flora of the Korean Peninsula.



ASIAN COLLECTIONS



MAP KEY

- A** KOREAN HILLSIDE
- B** CHINA VALLEY
- C** ASIAN VALLEY
- D** JAPANESE WOODLAND
- E** CAMELLIA COLLECTION
- F** PAGODA
- G** GATE TO THE ANACOSTIA RIVER AND DOCK



HOURS

Open 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily

Anacostia River Gate open 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily

Closed December 25

Please observe all parking signs, especially during Spring. Use designated parking lots or, where permitted during nonpeak season, park along the road with all tires on the pavement.

Bicycles are not permitted in the collections.
Dogs must be leashed at all times.

The Asian Collections exhibit plants from temperate regions of Asia, focusing on perennials, vines, shrubs, and trees collected from China, Japan, Korea, and Asiatic Russia—and cultivated varieties derived from these plants—that have the potential to grow well in the mid-Atlantic area of the United States.

Cover: The pagoda garden structure in the Asian Collections is dedicated to Dorothy R. Kidder by the Friends of the National Arboretum.

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